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Excerpt from Two Kinds

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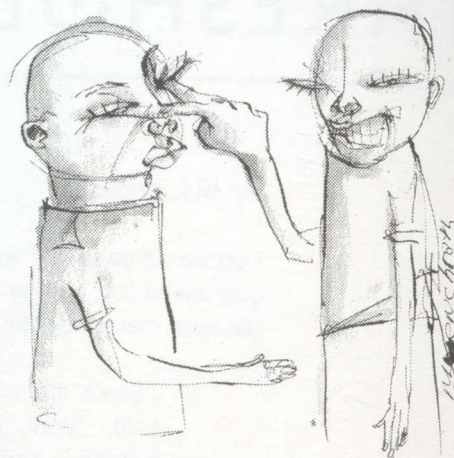
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EXCERPT FROM

Kinds

Two

Susan Holbrook



...

There are people who wash the utensils first and those who wash them last.

People who only cry in private and people who only cry in public.

People who pick up their dog's poop when nobody's around and people who don't.

People who clean their mouse regularly and people who think Something's wrong with my mouse over and over.

People who recycle, first washing out the cut off corners of plastic milk sacs as solicitously as if they were contact lenses, and people who throw Burger King bags out the car window.

People who open the door for you and people you open the door for.

People who open the door for you and you appreciate it and people who open the door for you and it's irritating.

People who love it when you open the door for them and people who refuse to let you do it, they want to be the door-opener, and you have a little fight about it.

People who let cars in, sometimes two, and people who don't let cars in, plough ahead.

The implied subtext is that it will all balance out, that I'm not letting you in because maybe I just let another guy in a few cars back or maybe yesterday. But the truth is, some people always let cars in and others never let cars in. Two kinds of people, like I'm telling you. What would life be like if not for the letters-in and how much extra time do the maybe-I-just-let-a-guy-in guys enjoy over the course of a lifetime, not to mention the time these same people probably save by not recycling or bagging their dog's poop in the park.

People who play Boggle and people who would rather be shot in the head.

You like an epiphany or you like a surprise.

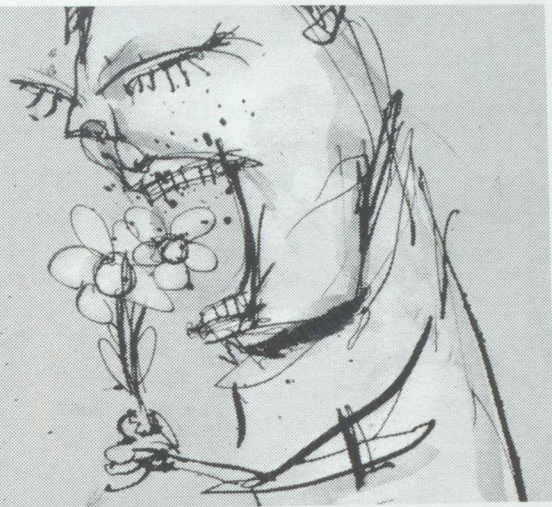
You are a binary thinker or you are and you aren't.

You say you basically dismantle 500 years of Western metaphysics in one fell swoop or you nap under a leaf's lip.
 People who keep eight rolls of toilet paper in the bathroom at all times and people who call out to other people.
 You boil too much pasta or you don't boil enough.
 You only like other people's children or you only like your own.
 You know all the different kinds of lentils or you resent your vegetarian dinner guests.
 You don't wear grey when you teach because it shows perspiration or you go to class with mustard crust on
 your upper lip and white shirt-tail jutting out of your open fly, sharp and stiff as a fancy napkin folded
 into a bird-of-paradise.
 Mangoes aren't worth the hairs in your teeth or they are.
 Terror of disorder keeps you up at night or terror of order does.
 It goes without saying for you or it doesn't.
 You never consider the body of your teacher or you eroticize your teacher, despite, maybe because of, the
 mustard and napkin-penis.
 After the cat vomits on the Persian rug you clean it up with Shout! and a green and yellow sponge or you scold
 the cat, maybe even give him back to the Humane Society, or you clean it up with the hem of your skirt
 and place the rug between his dish and cat-bed, tell him he'll have his own little vomit-carpet.
 Symbolic or indeterminate.
 Digital or analog.
 As far as hyphenated compound words go, you prefer go-cart, first-string and one-upmanship to the newer
 napkin-penis and vomit-carpet.
 You have a way with animals or squirrels smell your fear and attack.
 You can listen to two conversations at once or you can talk and listen at the same time or you can talk and
 listen to yourself at the same time.
 You count your salt & vinegar chips to make sure you only eat the fifteen that equal a serving or you count
 your change to see if you have enough to buy another bag of chips.
 You'd like to be cremated because you believe in ethereal reincarnation rather than bodily resurrection or
 you'd like to be cremated just to be sure you're really dead when they put you down there.
 You're not a group person or you go to political rallies and you're the first to shout "Shame!" during the speeches.
 You go to rallies because you care about the issues or you go to pick up girls.
 You learned the metric system in school or you snap at the guy measuring your window in centimetres to "talk English."
 You eat the dark meat because you prefer it or you eat the dark meat because other people want the white meat.
 You have your own photocopier at home or you wash your clothes with a plunger and a bucket.
 You think the only way to respond to a poem is to write another poem or you think the only way to respond to
 a poem is to run the other way.
 Crying babies make you lactate or crying babies make you get off the bus two stops early.
 To you beating the system means making fake passports or it means breaking the stems off the broccoli in Zehrs.
 You once rescued a duck or you once bagged a buck.
 Your mother put peanut butter in the gutter of your celery or she filled it with Cheez Whiz.



ILLUSTRATION BY DARRIN

- You ate it or you threw it out and bought fries and gravy at the caf.
- You are torn between the Green Party and the NDP or you are torn between the Alliance and the Christian Heritage Party. Either way you can say, both are pretty good on the gay issue.
- You mistake banter for fighting or you mistake fighting for banter and you wonder why you don't have a girlfriend.
- You flex your back or you flic your bic.
- You'll do in a pinch or you'll poo in a ditch.
- You'd like a cat in a basket or you'd like a bat in a casket.
- You think you're too flat in the bazooms or too fat in the caboose.
- You cast your ballot at the polls or you spoil the cast of your ballet.
- Are you eyeing my cup of Java or fucking up my vagina.
- You think the love you take is equal to the love you make or you can think of lots of examples where that isn't the case.
- Howard Hughes ate no oranges and Allen Ginsberg ate them whole, including rind, pith and seeds.
- You were shocked that nobody told you childbirth was so unbelievably erotic or you were shocked that nobody told you childbirth was so unbelievably agonizing and that those who say it's erotic are on drugs, full of shit, or men.
- You walk with scissors pointing away from you so you don't impale yourself or you walk with scissors pointing toward you so you don't impale other people.
- You walk with scissors or you don't, because it's unsafe, and you throw them instead.
- You buy your cat a carpeted jungle gym with a mobile of catnip-stuffed dolphins or you pull your cat around on a plastic bag from Canadian Tire.
- You believe in fate and are paralysed by the thought of your own powerlessness or you don't believe in fate and are paralysed by indecision.
- You think they don't pick up the phone because they're out of town or you think they don't pick up because they're screening and they hate you.
- You need to smarten up or you need to dumb down.



You are always a bridesmaid never a bride or you are always a bride and don't have bridesmaids because you pissed off all your friends by marrying their husbands.

People think you are a good egg or a bad seed.

A free spirit or a freeloader.

You subscribe to Gourmet magazine or you don't want fruit in soup.

You get Gloria Steinam and Gertrude Stein mixed up or you get the Bangles and the GoGos mixed up.

Or Orson Wells, H.G. Wells, and George Orwell.

You see an ad for a Ford SUV claiming their new folding backseat, the result of sophisticated problem-solving, "literally lets you have your cake and eat it too" and you think "literally"! well they've just undermined their argument with an unsophisticated grammatical flaw and you think of calling the number at the bottom of the page, a little word to the wise, but of course you would never do such a thing or, you wouldn't do such a thing except for once when you impulsively called the RealFruit Gummies people to tell them you got a bag with no green gummies in it, telling yourself they'll want to know about flaws in production and secretly speculating that they might send you a free bag, maybe even a crate, but the 18-year-old RealFruit Gummies customer service representative on the other end just said OoooooKay like you were a complete nincompoop and now you think Why not? I've already wasted 10 minutes thinking about this, why not call Ford? So you call and explain to the 18-year-old kid whose first word is "OoooooKay" that "literally" means not figuratively and that the ad is actually telling us there's cake in the truck that we're having and eating, but she's not really clueing in, not really grasping the urgency of the situation, and at the end of each of your sentences you hear your own voice in her ears and know that's all she has to go on, she doesn't know how attractive and sporty and well-rounded you are and you can tell she is wondering if this is a prank or you are a pervert or worse -- as your voice gets both thinner and more shrill, if that's possible -- someone who needs to get out more.

You need to get out more or you need to get in more.

You need to branch out or you need to put down roots.

You think a Pap smear involves the Vatican somehow or you have an apron that says Bar-B-Cutie and you wear it.

When you see a flag at half-mast you worry another former Prime Minister has died or you worry another Ramone has died.

You think Modigliani painted women's nipples too small or you think Emily Carr painted trees too big...